



**American  
Red Cross**

**Office of the General Counsel**  
431 18<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20006

**Writer's Direct Dial**  
(202) 303-5466  
Lori.Polacheck@redcross.org

August 28, 2020

*By email to [doug@meowmeowfoundation.org](mailto:doug@meowmeowfoundation.org)  
and [elena@meowmeowfoundation.org](mailto:elena@meowmeowfoundation.org)*

Mr. Doug Forbes  
Ms. Elena Matyas  
1644 Kaweah Drive  
Pasadena, CA 91105

Dear Mr. Forbes and Ms. Matyas,

I want to thank you again for your August 10, 2020 letter and for calling our attention to issues regarding training conducted at Summerkids Camp. Here at the American Red Cross, we are extremely saddened by the tragic loss of your beloved daughter and wish to extend our sincerest condolences.

We are also extremely grateful for your willingness to share information you've gathered in connection with the pending lawsuit against Summerkids, and we're very troubled by the training deviations. Based on information in the transcripts you provided, we are taking several immediate actions. First, we are revoking all certificates held by Andrew Cervantes and permanently barring him from obtaining Red Cross certificates in the future. Going forward, he will not be able to conduct any Red Cross training classes in any capacity.

We are also revoking all certificates associated with training conducted by Mr. Cervantes. This includes all current (not expired) certificates of lifeguards and water safety instructors who took classes taught by Mr. Cervantes. You have asked us to permanently bar these individuals from ever receiving Red Cross certificates, but at this time we do not have information to justify this step.

Further, Summerkids, Joe Di Massa, and Cara Di Massa will no longer be permitted to offer Red Cross training.

The Red Cross fully embraces your goal of making aquatic facilities and camps as safe as can be. That is our mission and why we have been helping people learn to swim and be water smart through our various curricula and programs for more than 100 years. It's also why, in 2014, we launched our Aquatics Centennial Campaign devoted to teaching water safety skills in communities where drowning numbers and rates exceed the national average. But we have to take exception to the statements in your letter suggesting that the Red Cross played a role in this tragedy. As you can understand, the Red Cross can't be responsible for the conduct of Summerkids Camp or its staff, and it can't be responsible for the

Page 2 of 2  
Doug Forbes and Elena Matyas  
August 28, 2020

conduct of an individual who was not employed by the Red Cross and who misused the Red Cross name and curriculum in violation of our standards and protocols.

Thank you again for bringing this issue to our attention, and thank you for letting us know about the laudable work of the Meow Meow Foundation. We would be happy to talk with you about ways the Meow Meow Foundation and our Centennial Campaign might work together on our common mission of water safety.

Please feel free to reach out with any additional questions.

Sincerely,

*Lori Polacheck*

Lori Polacheck  
Vice President and Chief Counsel, Mission Operations

cc: Phyllis Harris, Esq.